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RETROSPECTIVE STUDY ON VARIOUS CHARACTERISTICS OF SERVICE USERS IN A SUBSTANCE MISUSE OUTPATIENTS SERVICE IN LONDON

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Aims: To see the demographic characteristics, co morbidities, past family, psychiatric and forensic history, types of substances misused and treatment provided for patients attending outpatient substance misuse service.

Methods: 50 case notes were looked into, of patients attending from May-July 2008. A detailed tool was designed which looked at; age, gender, ethnic distribution and living conditions. Presence of medical, psychiatric, family, forensic history was noted. The number of substances, psychotherapeutic intervention and treatment was recorded.

Results: Out of the 50 patients, 35 were males while 15 were females. 9 were between 21-30 years , 27 between 31-50years, 14 over 51. 33 were White British, 7 Black Caribbean, 3 Asians and 2 mixed race.33 out of 50 were single and 25 had stable accommodation. 26 had a family history, 32 had a forensic history and 75% had physical problems. Out of the 50 patients, 18 did not have psychiatric history. 33 used 2 substances, 17 used 3 and 6 out of 50 used 4 substances.14 were given Methadone, 7 Buprenorphine, 13 were on Chlordiazepoxide and 1 switched between opiates.

Conclusions: There was a preponderance of male users, with majority of patients presenting to services with co-morbid physical conditions. Almost two thirds had a forensic history. About 66% of patients used more than one substance. Apart from one, none had psychotherapeutic intervention, which needs to be considered for the future. The study showed the complex cases that are seen in the Specialist service, and preponderance of poly substance users.